

LINNAEUS' MISSING MOLLUSCAN
REFERENCES FOUND

Kenneth J. Boss

Boss (1988) located all but two of the bibliographic citations to molluscan taxa made by Linnaeus in the 10th and 12th editions of the *Systema Naturae* (1758; 1767). One of these citations, "*Tessin. epist. 1 n. 28 Cymbium*" occurred under *Argonauta argo* as the 8th, and then as the 11th, reference, respectively (Linnaeus, 1758: 708; 1767: 1161).

In 1991, my colleague, Professor Lisbet Koerner, then in the Department of the History of Science here, explained that this work of Tessin's was "an old literary form called a mirror for princes", his letters of instructions to the then Crown Prince, the future Gustav III of Sweden (Koerner, *in litt.*).

Carl Gustav Tessin was not only a distinguished author but also an influential advisor to Adolf Frederick and Queen Louisa Ulrica, as well as an active member of the court, government and diplomatic service. As governor or tutor to the crown prince, he wrote a volume entitled *En Gammal Mans Bref Til En Ung Prints*; this work appeared in English (1755; 1759), in Swedish (1756) as well as in French; there are also other translations and an abbreviated text (1785). A surprising number of American university libraries, as well as the Boston Atheneum and the Library of Congress, possess copies of Tessin's *Letters*.

It is to this Swedish work that Linnaeus' enigmatic citation under *Argonauta argo* refers. The English

translation in its second edition (1759), available here at Harvard, remarks that, in regard to *Argonauta argo*, “the Latin names of this testaceous animal or its shell, are cymbium, nautilus tenuis legitimus, domuncula polypi, ovum polypi, nauplium Athenaei, piscis nautitus.” Tessin’s letter, No. xxviii, dated 7 June 1751, written from Ulrichsdahl is contained on pages 163 - 173 of Volume 1 of the translation. Bibliographic citations to earlier works in natural history such as Rumphius, Gualtieri and d’Argenville are included in it and were subsequently utilized by Linnaeus (1758; 1767).

Also, Count Tessin, as many other Eighteenth Century aristocrats, collected minerals, rocks and fossil shells; Linnaeus (1753) wrote a volume on this collection, introducing several species’ names which were referred to as *Anomia*, *Pinna* and *Arca*; more of these were binomial and more were subsequently cited in his *Systema*.

Dr. Alan R. Kabat kindly pointed out that the following abbreviated citation utilized by Linnaeus for mollusks was overlooked.

Müller mentioned a slug found on a mushroom and this became the original reference for *Limax albus* described in the 12th edition of the *Systema Naturae* (1767: 1081). This work on fungi was cited only once by Linnaeus under mollusca.

ABBREVIATED CITATION

Müller, *swamp. Hafn*, 1763, p. 61.

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